DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 243 848 SP 024 235

AUTHOR Bates, Gary W.; Hutchinson, Carroll M. P.
TITLE The Effects of Early Field Experience Tutoring in Reading on Secondary Majors' Attitudes, Expectations and Teaching Effectiveness.
PUB DATE 24 Apr 84
NOTE 14p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (68th, New Orleans, LA, April 23-27, 1984).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Content Area Reading; *Education Majors; *Field Experience Programs; Higher Education; Individual Instruction; Preservice Teacher Education; *Program Effectiveness; Reading Strategies; Secondary School Students; Secondary School Teachers; *Student Attitudes; Teacher Behavior; Teaching Methods; *Tutoring

ABSTRACT

The Early Field Experience (EFE) is the laboratory component of a "Reading in the Content Area" methods course. Preservice secondary education teacher candidates are required to tutor a middle or high school student on a one-to-one basis for a semester. Content area reading strategies are taught in class and the EFE students apply them in their tutoring sessions and observe the effectiveness and appropriateness of the various methods taught. A study sought to determine the effects of this program on 90 secondary education majors' attitudes toward teaching reading in content areas, tutoring, expectations of tutoring, and tutoring effectiveness. A review of relevant studies summarizes recent research on the effects of required reading methods on preservice majors' attitudes and teaching practices, changes in EFE students' attitudes and behaviors, and the effectiveness of learning through tutoring. Pre- and post-tests measured the participants' attitudes toward tutoring and content area reading. An analysis is presented of the findings. It is suggested that a follow-up study should be made of the EFE students who were part of this study and are now classroom teachers. (JD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED243848

The Effects of Early Field Experience Tutoring in Reading on Secondary Majors' Attitudes, Expectations and Teaching Effectiveness

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Gary W. Bates

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

by
Gary W. Bates, Ph.D.
Carrol M.P. Hutchinson, M.Ed.
College of Education
Ohio University
Athens, Ohio 45701-2979

Presented to the meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, April 24, 1984.

SP024235

The need for early field experiences (EFE) in educational methods courses has been acknowledged by educators since the beginning of the twentieth century (Dewey, 1904).

The EFE in this study was the laboratory component of a "Reading in the Content Areas" methods course. Pre-service secondary teacher candidates were required to tutor a middle or high school student on a one-to-one basis. Through individual tutoring, pre-service teachers practiced teaching reading and study skills methods in a low-stress environment.

Moore (1968) attributes success in tutoring to three factors: the nature of the subject, the method of teaching, and the attitude of the tutor (p. 10).

In this EFE the tutees determined the nature of the subject through their personal needs and requests and also through cooperation with their tutors in diagnosing areas of weakness in reading and study skills habits.

Content area reading strategies (teaching methods) were taught in class and the EFE students applied them in their tutoring sessions and observed the effectiveness and appropriateness of the various methods taught. Learning content area reading and study skills teaching strategies and being able to apply them immediately in the cooperative atmosphere of the tutoring sessions should have some positive effect on the pre-service teachers' attitudes.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of an early field experience (EFE) program on secondary education majors' attitudes toward teaching reading in the content areas, attitudes

toward tutoring, expectations of tutoring, and tutoring effectiveness.

RELEVANT STUDIES

Attitudes

Welle (1981) found that a required reading methods course had a significant positive effect on secondary education majors' attitudes toward teaching reading in the content areas.

Stieglitz (1983) reported on a four-year study to determine the effects of a reading methods course on secondary education majors' attitudes and teaching practices. Stieglitz found that students who had completed the course had significantly more positive attitudes toward teaching reading in the content area than students who had not. Further, a significant positive effect on teaching practices was also found.

O'Rourke (1980) reports on a study designed to determine secondary teachers' attitudes toward teaching reading in the content areas. He included both junior and senior high school teachers from four disciplines: English, math, science, and social studies. There were no differences in attitudes of the teachers between the two levels investigated. However, there were significant differences in attitudes based upon content area and whether or not the teachers had any reading education. English teachers and those who had taken a reading course or participated in a reading workshop scored significantly higher in attitude. Science teachers and those who had not had any reading education scored the lowest.

Applegate and Lasley (1983) found that EFE students want opportunities to work directly with pupils in small groups. They expect tutoring in small group situations to contribute to their professional growth and allow them to practice what they have learned

in methods courses in a less threatening format than in a whole-class situation. This reduction in anxiety is associated with more positive attitudes toward tutoring.

Tabachnick (1980) found that EFE students changed over time in both attitudes and behaviors. He found that students began to find reasons to accept teaching behaviors previously identified by the students as unacceptable. Tabachnick concluded that his results confirm Hoy and Rees' (1977) report that after practice teaching, student teachers are more bureaucratic and oriented toward custodial pupil control.

Austin-Martin, Bull, and Molrine (1981) found that EFE students had a significant positive increase in their interpersonal skills as measured by the Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory.

Sherer (1979) found that EFE had a significant positive effect on students' self-concept as measured after student teaching. However, those students who had not participated in an EFE showed no change in their self-concepts after student teaching. She concludes that EFE has a latent positive effect on self-concept.

Tutoring

Elliott and Mays (1979) describe early field experiences as providing the developmental opportunities to be a success in the classroom. Through the EFE programs the tutors can gain insignt into the reality of the school environment as compared to their own personal ideas about schools.

Alverman, Boothby, Merrion, and Waack (1983) found that a majority of the participants in an EFE program perceived a change in their beliefs about teaching and a change in their teaching behaviors.

Cohen, Kulik, and Kulik (1983) report on a meta-analysis of

increasing the reading level of children in the first, second, and third grades. According to the authors this cross-age tutoring program also resulted in a substantial increase in the tutors' reading levels and it assisted them in making career choices.

METHOD

Subjects

Students enrolled in a required secondary reading methods course were the subjects in this study. Two sections of the course from winter and two from spring quarter, 1983, were studied for a total of four sections (n=90). Most students were seniors, but a few were juniors or graduates returning to meet state certification requirements. Students represented the major content areas of English, social science, science, music/art education, physical education, health, home economics/industrial arts, and a group called "all others." Students in this group represented areas such as business, psychology, and French, with only one or two per discipline.

Instruments

At the first class meeting of each section each quarter, the Attitude Inventory Toward Teaching Students To Learn From Texts In The Content Areas (Singer & Donlan, 1980) was administered as a pretest. This inventory contains 14 items arranged in a Likert format with choices ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." It was administered a second time as a posttest on the last class day of each 10-week quarter. Student numbers were used to preserve anonymity.

A ten-item questionnaire was developed to measure attitude toward and expectations of tutoring. Under each of the ten questions there were several responses which required the respondent to answer by checking yes or no.

findings from 65 studies of the effects of tutoring on the children being tutored. They found that tutoring programs have positive effects on the academic performance and attitudes of those who receive tutoring.

Denton (1983) found that EFE in a secondary education methods course provided the EFE students with a basis for analyzing their teaching knowledge and skills.

Moore (1968) describes the role of the tutor as a teacher of method rather than of fact. He attributes tutoring success to cooperation between the tutor and tutee and believes that tutoring can bolster self-confidence for both tutor and tutee.

Sharpley, Irvine, and Sharpley (1983) found that both tutors and tutees reacted favorably to a tutoring program. Parents of tutees reported that the tutoring experience had a positive effect both academically and socially.

Effectiveness

Wood, Bates, and Binkley (1983) found that secondary education majors' involvement in an EFE program had a significant positive effect on middle school students' achievement and behaviors and on teachers' classroom performance.

Cloward (1967) reports on a study using high school students as tutors. He found a significant positive effect on the tutees' reading performance.

Elliott and Mays (1979) conclude that EFE students are effective simply because the tutees receive additional attention aimed at their own specific areas of need.

McWhorter and Levy (1970) found that in an inner-city tutoring program, trained high school students were highly effective in

The questions covered several areas concerning past tutoring experience, problems with and/or the results of previous tutoring, advice for prospective tutors based on their own previous tutoring experience, the ways in which they feel tutoring benefits the future educator, topics which the student had tutored, and various drawbacks in tutoring. This questionnaire was administered as both a pre and posttest on the first and last class sessions respectively for each quarter.

Tutor effectiveness was measured by an evaluation form completed by the college supervisor after observing a tutoring session. Each tutor was observed approximately three times for 15-20 minutes during a 10-week period. A second measure of effectiveness was taken by analyzing the tutees' evaluations of their tutoring at the end of each quarter.

Procedures

Students enrolled in the reading in the content areas course were simultaneously enrolled in a laboratory component. The laboratory component required the students to prepare lessons for and to teach a student one-to-one for twenty hours during the quarter. Students were taught various reading and study skills teaching strategies and practices in the classroom portion of the course. They were to adapt the learned strategies to the individual needs of their tutee and apply them to help the tutee learn how to read and learn content area material more efficiently.

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA AND RESULTS

A univariate analysis of covariance was used to determine if there were any significant differences among teaching majors on the posttest attitude scores. Pretest attitude scores were used as the

covariate. There were no significant differences among the teaching major groups ($p > .05$) on attitude following the early field experience in reading tutoring.

Chi-square analyses were used to determine if there was a significant effect for training in tutoring on the perceived effectiveness of the EFE students and to determine if there were any significant changes in expectations following the tutoring. There was a significant positive effect for training in tutoring on the effectiveness of the EFE students as perceived by the students being tutored ($X^2 = 69.1364$, df=1). There was no significant difference in perceived effectiveness among the various content majors as perceived by those being tutored or by the university supervisor.

There were significant differences in EFE students' tutoring attitudes and expectations following the tutoring. The majority of EFE students felt that the tutoring was "too time consuming" ($X^2 = 19.0476$, df=1). However, the EFE students also felt that they were well matched with their tutee ($X^2 = 61.7143$, df=1); that they could get their ideas across ($X^2 = 58.333$, df=1); could use class assignments and exercises in their tutoring ($X^2 = 34.7143$, df=1); could motivate their tutee ($X^2 = 29.7619$, df=1); that they didn't feel discouraged after their tutoring sessions ($X^2 = 42.8571$, df=1); that they had teacher cooperation ($X^2 = 72.4286$, df=1); that their tutees were cooperative ($X^2 = 48.7619$, df=1), showed appreciation ($X^2 = 48.7619$, df=1), and wanted help, not friendship ($X^2 = 72.4286$, df=1). They did not find that time scheduling was a problem ($X^2 = 19.0476$, df=1); nor did they find that they became too personally involved ($X^2 = 68.7619$, df=1) nor too emotionally involved with their tutee ($X^2 = 25.9286$, df=1). All of these

findings are significant at p > .01 (experiment wise) using the Bonferroni Chi-square statistic.

DISCUSSION

Perhaps the most important finding of this study was that the students being tutored (middle and high school students) personally identified benefits from being tutored. The most frequently mentioned benefits were better exam and quarter grades, and being able to understand more of what was going on in their content classrooms.

A second important finding was the fact that there were no differences in EFE students' attitudes or effectiveness in reading tutoring due to their major area of preparation (English, social science, science, music/art, physical education, health, home economics/industrial arts, or "other"). This finding does not support the findings by O'Rourke (1980) that English majors had significantly better attitudes and science majors significantly poorer attitudes toward reading in the content areas. It does, however, lend support to his finding that regardless of discipline, those who had taken a reading course or participated in a reading workshop had significantly higher attitudes.

It had been anticipated that EFE students would improve significantly in their attitudes toward reading in the content areas as a result of their experiences. The fact that this was not observed may be due to two possible reasons. First, the pretest attitude scores of the students were uniformly high (mean=49.3) so that there was little room for improvement (posttest mean=52.5). Singer and Donlan (1980) report a mean of 53 (out of a possible 60) for secondary education majors on this measure (p. 26).

The second possible explanation is that, as written, the Attitude

Inventory Toward Teaching Students To Learn From Texts In The Content Areas (Singer & Donlan, 1980) does not discriminate well between students with high and low attitudes toward teaching reading in the content areas.

Perhaps a better indicator of EFE students' post attitude would be their responses to the questionnaire developed for this study by the investigators. According to the analysis of students' responses to this questionnaire, they felt that the reading tutoring was "too time consuming." However, no other drawbacks were identified by a significant number of the students. In fact, students' overall attitudes and expectations about tutoring after their EFE were positive. The positive aspects covered relevance of the course work to the EFE, relationships with the tutee and school personnel, and their own effectiveness.

The EFE in reading tutoring which was a part of this study appears to have been a successful experience for both the secondary education majors and the students they tutored. The EFE gave the prospective teachers the opportunity to experiment with teaching strategies and techniques which they learned in class by immediately implementing them in their tutoring sessions. In this way, students were able to return to class and seek clarification on procedures and to discuss their observations on the effectiveness and appropriateness of various teaching techniques learned.

The way in which the tutoring was carried out gave the tutees the opportunity to alter inefficient reading and study habits so that they left the tutoring experience with a process to use and not just a few products.

An important follow-up study to this initial investigation would

be to survey the EFE students who were part of this study now that they are classroom teachers to determine if the training in tutoring they had in reading strategies and practices has had any long-term effect on their teaching behaviors. For, in fact, the goal of teacher education programs should be to produce long-term teaching behavior changes.

REFERENCES

Alverman, D., Boothby, P., Merrion, M., & Waack, W. Exploratory field experience programs: Do they influence college students' beliefs? Paper presented at the meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, April, 1983.

Applegate, J. & Lasley, T. What undergraduates expect from preservice field experiences. Paper presented at the meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, April, 1983.

Austin-Martin, G., Bull, D. & Molrine, C. A study of the effectiveness of pre-student teaching experience in promoting positive attitudes toward teaching. Peabody Journal of Education, 1981, 58, 148-153.

Cloward, R. D. Studies in tutoring. Journal of Experimental Education, 1967, 36, 1, 14-25.

Cohen, P. A. Kulik, J. A., & Kulik, C.-L.C. Educational outcomes of tutoring: A meta-analysis of findings. American Educational Research Journal, 1982, 19, 237-248.

Denton, J. Do early field experiences in teacher education provide a meaningful context for acquiring pedagogical knowledge? Paper presented at the meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, April, 1983.

Dewey, J. The reflection of theory to practice in education. In Charles A. McMurry (ed.) The third yearbook of the national society for the scientific study of education, Part I. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1904.

Elliott, P. G., & Mays, R. E. Early field experiences in teacher education. (Fastback 125). Bloomington, Indiana: Phi Delta Kappa Education Association, 1979.

Hoy, W. & Rees, R. The bureaucratic socialization of student teachers. Journal of Teacher Education, 1977, 28, 23-26.

McWhorter, K. & Levy, J. The influence of a tutorial program upon tutors. Journal of Reading, 1970, 14, 4, 221-224.

Moore, W. The tutorial system and its future. London: Pergamon, 1968.

O'Rourke, W. Research on the attitude of secondary teachers toward teaching reading in content classrooms. Journal of Reading, 1980, 23, 4, 337-339.

Scherer, C. Effects of early field experiences on student teachers' self-concepts and performance. Journal of Experimental Education, 1979, 47, 3, 208-214.

Sharpley, A., Irvine, J. & Sharpley, C. An examination of the effectiveness of a cross-age tutoring program in mathematics for elementary school children. American Educational Research Journal, 1983, 20, 1, 103-111.

Singer, H. & Donlan, D. Reading and learning from text. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1980.

Steiglitz, E. Effects of content area reading course on teacher attitudes and practices: A four year study. Journal of Reading, 1983, 26, 8, 690-696.

Tabachnik, B. R. Intern-teacher roles: Illusion, disillusion and reality. Journal of Education, 1980, 15, 1, 122-137.

Welle, D. Effects of a required reading methods course on attitudes of secondary education majors: A three year study. Journal of Reading, 1981, 25, 2, 134-136.

Wood, G., Bates, G. & Binkley, M. The effects of early field experience students on middle school students' achievement, and behavior and teachers' performance. Ohio Middle School Journal, 1983, 1, 1, 13-21.